

Responses to Natural Resources Commission Questions

1. What do you consider to be the most important duty of being a member of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC)?
 - a. This body of citizens is selected by the Governor to represent various constituencies served by the NRC, the general public, and interest that are impacted by the NRC rules, departments, and operations. Our purpose is largely to hear the voices of that immediate audience as we set policy that will govern the operations of the department, while insuring the protection and promotion of the unique natural resources of the state.
2. How much influence should the Governor have in the selection of the DNR Director?
 - a. The NRC has the responsibility of hiring the Department director. I believe that input from the governor's office is helpful and advisable in that the position is a member of the governor's cabinet. I do, however, believe that this responsibility should rest with the Commission in that the position serves both the Governor and the Commission.
3. What leadership and management qualities do you believe the DNBR Director should possess? Of those qualities, what is the single most important quality?
 - a. The DNR is a broad and multidisciplined resource management agency. Its director should possess a strong knowledge of the realm of natural resources with a demonstrated history of exposure to issues peculiar to its functions. Of critical importance the demonstration of strong academic, administrative, and management leadership.
4. Do you believe that there should be more opportunities for the public to comment on natural resources issues? If so, would you support the reestablishment of some of the boards and commissions that were abolished by the Engler Administration?
 - a. I believe that public participation in government is essential to ensuring the viability of services. There are two places for that; one is the polls, and the other public comment opportunities. There were many boards, commissions, and committees that gave voice to the public. These entities provided educational exposure to both administrative leadership and the public. There were possibly some that were not as productive as others.

5. The Governor has indicated in the past that she might consider recombining the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the DNR into one department. What is your opinion of such a move?
 - a. There is great synchronicity with the two departments, considering their necessary overlap in some instances. I would be interested in an in-depth analysis of the success or failure of the split, from regulatory, programmatic, and fiscal perspective before I can render an opinion.
6. Current law gives the legislature authority to veto any DNR planned sale of state park land or wilderness areas. Do you think the legislature should have an oversight like this?
 - a. My experience with this area is that the legislature has been sensitive and respectful of the analysis and preparation of the department in this regard. As stewards of public lands, the department recognizes the public trust value of state parks, wilderness areas, and unique natural features. The justification demonstrated in these presentations for either acquisition or removal is exhaustive and diligent. The legislative involvement guarantees that this process will be inviolate, therefore rendering it a uniquely inclusive process.
7. What is your view of the proposed increase in hunting and fishing fees?
 - a. In light of the present fiscal environment, the fees are the most accessible and controllable venue for revenue enhancement for the department. The guarantee of resource dedication makes this move even more palatable.
8. Should a state park ever be sold?
 - a. In general, I would not be in favor of selling any state park, however, there may be certain circumstances that would support the sale of state parkland. The department must look at its management capabilities and determine priorities. It could be that some parcels may not serve their original intent, or the department is better served allowing local government to manage the lands. Essentially, these decisions are best made on a case by case basis.
9. Would you support a statewide recreation tax to help fund state parks, state game lands, and other broad-based recreation facilities?
 - a. Barring any other options, yes. If there were dedicated funds from a statewide tax that provided revenues equal to the present budget allocation, plus up to 35%, it would make sense. The dedicated tax must be able to accommodate any potential cost increases as well as

provide for a maintenance of effort at some agreed upon level of funding.

10. What is your view of corporate sponsorship of state park facilities?
 - a. I view this as one option that would help provide a fiscal balance for the department. A well thought sponsorship plan could provide resources that will guarantee service levels appropriate to our facilities.